

EXPANDED NATURAL RESOURCES INTERIM COMMITTEE QUARTERLY REPORT JUNE 18, 2004

This quarterly report is being made available to the public by the Expanded Natural Resources Interim Committee pursuant to the terms of the Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer Mitigation, Recovery and Restoration Agreement for 2004, dated March 20, 2004.

The Committee is composed of 18 legislative members along with 18 ad hoc legislative members, and is co-chaired by Senator Laird Noh and Representative Dell Raybould.

Beginning in April, 2004, the Committee has met on a monthly basis as required by the terms of the agreement. Committee meetings are held in Boise.

The primary goal of the Committee's April 9 meeting was to educate the members, and those in attendance, about the history and status of water supply and management throughout the State of Idaho. The Idaho Department of Water Resources provided detailed information about aquifers located throughout the state. In addition, the Committee was briefed relating to Idaho water law. The attorney general's office reviewed the terms of the ESPA agreement and the Co-chair addressed plans for the initial organizational structure of the Committee. Five regional working groups were formed including the North Idaho Aquifers Working Group, the Treasure Valley Aquifer Working Group, the Mountain Home Aquifer Working Group, the Eastern Snake River Aquifer - Snake River (ESPA) Working Group and the Bear River Aquifer Working Group. Idaho Department of Water Resources and contractor support personnel were assigned to each working group to assist with technical matters to be reviewed and considered by the groups. An executive branch coordination group was also identified.

During its meeting in May, the Committee focused on the issue of recharge. The Committee reviewed recharge efforts that are occurring in the state at this time or that have been studied and heard from the various interests involved, including the Bureau of Reclamation and Idaho Power, regarding their views relating to recharge. The rehabilitation of Minidoka Dam was also addressed. Commissioner John Keys from the Bureau of Reclamation addressed the Committee as well as the Bureau's Regional Director, Bill McDonald.

During the Committee's most recent meeting, held on June 3, a presentation was made to the Committee by Dr. Phiip Mote, a research scientist with the University of Washington's Climate Impacts Group. Additional agenda items included technical presentations relating to Eastern Snake River Plains Aquifer modeling by Gary Johnson and Donna Cosgrove with the University of Idaho and an overview of the North Idaho Aquifers was provided by Dale Ralston of Ralston Hydrologic Services located in

Moscow, Idaho.

The working groups generally meet on a monthly basis in their respective regional locations and then report back to the Committee during the Committee's monthly meetings. The working groups consist of anywhere from 3 legislative members in the Bear River Aquifer Working Group to 13 legislative members in the ESPA Working Group. The working groups have reported significant public interest and attendance during their respective meetings. Recently, the ESPA Working Group also created a Water Management Study Group and an Implementation Study Group to address specific issues of importance to the ESPA Working Group. In addition, periodic telephone conferences are conducted with the signators of the agreement to discuss progress of the Committee.

In order to provide the public with an efficient source of information relating to the business of the Committee, Legislative Services provides Committee, working group and study group information on its legislative website. In addition, the Idaho Department of Water Resources has developed a web page to specifically track the business of the Committee as well as the working groups and study groups. Notices, agendas and minutes are posted on the sites and the IDWR site also posts various power point presentations that are presented during meetings for the public's information. IDWR also prepares and distributes press releases for the various meetings. The respective websites are located at the following addresses:

Legislative Services:

<http://www2.state.id.us/legislat/2004%20Interim/04intcom.html#resource>

Idaho Department of Water Resources: www.idwr.state.id.us/Committee

The Committee's next meeting is scheduled for July 7 with subsequent meetings scheduled for August 5, September 2, October 14, November 18, and tentatively December 17.